

REMARKS

The undersigned would like to thank Examiner Katcheves for her helpful discussion on August 18, 2003, regarding the condition of the claims. The Advisory Action dated July 2, 2003, indicated that the Amendment filed on June 2, 2003, was not entered because newly presented claims 10-12 raised new issues. In the telephone conference on August 18, 2003, the Examiner indicated that claims 1-8 presented in the Amendment filed on June 2, 2003, appear otherwise allowable if claims 10-12 are excluded. Accordingly, without prejudice or disclaimer, and solely to facilitate the allowance of claims 1-8, Applicants present only claims 1-8 in this Amendment and request entry of claims 1-8, which are identical to those presented in the previous Amendment of June 2, 2003, which had not been entered. Applicants reserve the right to pursue the subject matter of claims 10-12 in a continuing application.

Claims 1-8 contain no new matter and should now be found allowable. The Office stated in the Office Action of March 21, 2003, that prior claims 8 and 9 would be allowable if written in independent form. Accordingly, without prejudice or disclaimer and solely to facilitate prosecution, Applicants have amended independent claim 1 to incorporate all of the limitations of prior claim 9, and claim 8 has been rewritten in independent form. Claims 2-7 are all dependent on claim 1. Thus, the Office should now find allowable all of claims 1-8.

Upon entry of the amendments, the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over either Kauppinen et al. (U.S. Patent No. 5,994,113) or Umitsuki (EP 0

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967 286) in view of Murakami et al. (EP 0 427 385), are rendered moot because the Examiner has already found prior claims 8 and 9 allowable over these references.


In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, Applicants respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection and the timely allowance of the pending claims. If this paper does not put the claims in condition for allowance, Applicants earnestly request that the Examiner contact the undersigned at (202) 408-4294 to schedule an interview.

The undersigned has been given limited recognition under 37 C.F.R. § 10.9(b) to prosecute this patent application. That document granting limited recognition is enclosed herewith.

Please grant any extensions of time required to enter this response and charge any additional required fees to our deposit account 06-0916.

Respectfully submitted,

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By: 
Yuko Soneoka
Limited Recognition under
37 C.F.R. § 10.9(b)

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